



## Southwest Quay Soil & Water Conservation District

1304 CR AB, MELROSE, NM 88124

### 2023-2024 Report of Activities

#### *Board and Mission*

Southwest Quay Soil and Water Conservation works with producers in the area to safeguard and enhance soils in our district. We are committed to promoting soil health through outreach, research, and support to our local producers. We encourage and educate current farmers and ranchers as well as up-coming farmers and ranchers about the many ways to preserve the land.

We also work with the producers to improve and protect our water resources. We advise landowners on nutrient management strategies and erosion prevention practices. We make sure landowners have the proper tools they need to protect water from sediment runoff, nutrients and other contaminants. With our area being in a drought, we work with stakeholders in managing water quantity to help ensure a sufficient supply exists to meet a variety of needs. We work to prevent and mitigate the effects of drought.

We take great pride in our land and the resources in it. We love to work with the producers in helping them get the most they can out of their land and water. We do the best we can to meet the needs of all the producers and encourage them to reach out to us to let us know what we can do for them.

Our District Board Members include:

Chairman-Kole Tatum	Supervisor- Preston Downey
Vice Chair- Jovani Armendariz	Supervisor- Kandy Hutchins
Sec/trea- Clyde Moon	Supervisor - Bobby Lee
Supervisor – Lisa Runyan	District Manager – Lynnae Abarca

#### *Funding*

SW Quay SWCD received most of our funding from the state legislation using the Point System. As a District we also received full funding through a water quality grant to be able to conduct our ground water monitoring project in FY 24. We are excited to have received grant funding through the Water Quality Grant, Healthy Soils Grant, and Legacy Grant for FY25. We plan on using these funds to increase producer involvement and implement new conservation practices. We had the pleasure as well of working with the Playa Lake Restoration and receiving funds for this. We also work with other districts in the state and Zeigler Geologic Consulting to be able to support the 4-H and the FFA in their Judging achievements related to Soil and Water Conservation.

## *Education*

Each of our board members have all taken time to attend many educational meetings and workshops. Some of these include NMACD and NACD meetings, Healthy Soil Trainings, and Grant Writing Workshops. We have continued sending out our quarterly newsletter to share our knowledge gained with all our producers. We were excited to be able to sponsor many events to further Soil and Water conservation including the NMACD regional meeting, Llano Estacado RC&D Prairie Partners, and the NM Envirothon. We have also had the opportunity to sponsor some of our local 4-H kids in being a sponsor for the Quay County 4-H Rodeo and JH/HS National Rodeo Finalists.

## *Conservation Projects*

Groundwater Hydrology Study as many of you know, Southwest Quay SWCD launched a long-term groundwater monitoring project at the beginning of 2017. In partnership with a team of geologists with Zeigler Geologic Consulting, the SWCD is seeking to gather data to help us all understand the groundwater resources our producers rely on. We've learned quite a lot in the last four years, but we still have a way to go to fully understand the aquifers in the area. The data that we are gathering includes static water level measurements, water chemistry, and tritium isotopes. Each August and each February, the geology team comes through to check the depth to water in the 35+ wells that are part of the monitoring network. We are looking to expand this project in FY25 by expanding to more producers and amount of data gathered.

Southwest Quay Soil and Water Conservation likes to offer a few cost-share programs to our producers. The two that we currently offer are Shade Balls and Brush Control. In both programs we will pay for a portion of the total cost of purchasing brush control or shade balls. In FY24 we were able to give \$1500 Worth of Shade Balls to producers.

We are also excited to have been able to offer Playa Lake Restoration this year. Playas provide many benefits to people and wildlife including groundwater recharge, water filtration, erosion and flood control, and upland game bird hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities.

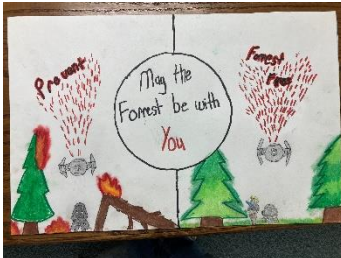
During FY24 we were also able to work in conjunction with Kim Kostelnik to put together a Land Use Plan for the district. This is a huge accomplishment as it has been a goal for many years. We aim to use this document in many ways to better the soil and water conservation in our area.

## *Voice of Conservation*

Many of our board members have been given the opportunity to speak and participate in different webinars and workshops. Some of these include 2 Field Days that we were able to host for our district. We were able to have one Field Day on April 18<sup>th</sup> for the youth at House Schools over Monitoring Wells. We also had a similar field day on April 19<sup>th</sup> for the producers in the area. Both field days were packed full of knowledge about wells, ground water, and the importance of good conservation. We were also able to partner with 3 other neighboring districts in FY24 to bring another Annual Meeting/Legislative Event to the area. We were able to better educate producers on district happening in the area as well as legislative happening at a state level.



In conjunction with the NACD we also hosted our annual Poster Contest. This was for all age groups within our district (adult to kindergarten). We were able to educate all the participants about “May the Forest be With You” through this contest. Below are pictures of the winning posters for this year’s contest.



## *Awards*

We work yearly with other districts in the state to be able to award kids that participate in FFA and 4-H judging contests. The contests awarded this year include land, range, agronomy, homesite, and forestry. We were excited to be able to fund the first-place team as well as the first, second, and third place individuals in these contests. Through support in the program from neighboring districts and producers, we were able to award over \$6500 to upcoming producers in FY24. Some of which were local participants from Dora FFA photographed below.

